

THE FAIRMOUNT BULLETIN

Official Organ of The Fairmount Improvement Association

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No. 3

PROPERTY OF
Hyde Park Historical Society



ONE OF FAIRMOUNT'S LANDMARKS—THE WATER TOWER

The standpipe of the Hyde Park Water Company, a view of which is here given, was built in the summer of 1890. It is situated about opposite the ends of Milton avenue and Prospect street. It covers the highest hill in the Fairmount district and is a conspicuous object from any point within a radius of 10 or 20 miles. The standpipe has a capacity of 500,000 gallons, while the reservoir which lies at its base holds 1,500,000 gallons. The water in this reservoir does not

enter into the supply of Hyde Park, and is only kept as a reservoir in case of urgent need, such as a big conflagration or a prolonged drought. From the top of the standpipe a beautiful view is obtained, a clear day bringing Bunker Hill Monument and towns along the North Shore in sight. The old white water tower in Roxbury, the water towers of Canton, Needham and Dedham and Norwood's reservoir can also be plainly seen.

SEEDS

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Often it seems as if officials impart information concerning town affairs with about as much reluctance as they would display in having a tooth pulled, never considering that it is secrecy not frankness that blasts men's lives.

Tom Thumb, Admiral Dot and General Mite are named as our most famous dwarfs, but one of the crew of a Gloucester fishing vessel, of whom we read recently, must have been much more diminutive than either of them. He slept upon his watch.

Jim—I see that lobsters are reported to be gradually disappearing.

John—O, I don't know; I understand quite a supply was discovered on election day in "blocks of eighty."

Johnnie—Aunty, you liked that gumdrop, didn't you?

Aunty—Why, yes Johnnie; it was very nice.

Johnnie—Fido didn't like it aunty; he spit it out twice.

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3 BANK BLOCK, - - - - - HYDE PARK, MASS.

OUR SCHOOL GROUNDS

What a blessing it would be if the spirit of Arbor day should enter the souls of our School Committee and inspire them to beautify the surroundings of our schoolhouses. Think for a moment the improvement it would be to the whole neighborhood if the rickety, unsightly fence surrounding the yard of the Fairmount school should be replaced with a hedge, if the bare yard was here and there dotted with shrubbery, if the ungainly building was adorned with a few trailing vines. It would add hundreds of dollars to the valuation of the surrounding property. Furthermore, it would be one of the best educational features in the whole curriculum.

We spend thousands of dollars yearly in instruction calculated to create a love and appreciation of the beautiful in the young minds in our schools, then straightway discount it all by inclosing them within bare walls and surrounding them with untidy, unsightly and unimproved grounds.

If the boys and girls in our school were taught by dally object lessons to appreciate and value shrubbery and foliage and things beautiful, you would soon see results in the home surroundings. There would be less of the vandalism that now disgraces some of our boys to the annoyance of our best citizens.

NEW ENGINE HOUSE NEEDED

The very comprehensive report given at the town meeting, March 29, in reference to the condition of the central fire engine house would seem, to any thinking citizen, to compel imperatively the immediate construction of more suitable quarters. There are surely cases where repairs are advisable, but the actual condition of the fire station is almost like a disintegrated cask. There is nothing left but the bunghole, so far as its usefulness is concerned for actual requirements.

Seriously, fire is probably the greatest calamity against which the town is called

upon to guard. We are almost exempt from danger of serious floods or other disasters that mining and other sections of the country have to face. Our water supply is a most valuable adjunct to the fire department. The town can, by virtue of an adequate pressure of water that is always available, handle fires most satisfactorily and economically. This fact makes it logical and desirable that every reasonable means be adopted by the town to assist the efficient officers and men of the department in reaching a fire at the earliest moment with their apparatus.

Much might be said in reference to conveniences for men, apparatus and horses, impossible in present quarters. To any citizen who will take the time to visit the station it will be apparent that a very great danger exists owing to cramped quarters and the dilapidated condition of the building. Owing to these conditions an accident is liable to occur at the time of an alarm which will delay or disable the apparatus, with consequences too serious to contemplate or permit of further delay in the construction of a new fire station.

The suggestion has been made that it will be well to include the consideration of a new police station with the fire engine house. As they are adjoining buildings great economy in construction and maintenance would result and a more sightly structure be secured.

NEPONSET AVENUE DRAIN

With the opening of spring we should look for a beginning on the Neponset avenue drain. This matter has been long enough in coming to a head, and in justice to those who have suffered from it the work should be done at once now that the town has voted to have it done and made the appropriation therefor.

Why does Rhode Island constantly need to be "saved?" inquires the New York Sun. She ought not to feel discouraged, knowing that Providence is always with her.

PLEASE LEAVE YOUR ORDERS EARLY FOR
SPRING SUITS

ROBERT GRAY
LADIES' AND GENTLEMEN'S
CUSTOM TAILOR

41 FAIRMOUNT AVE., - - - HYDE PARK

The Fairmount Bulletin

In the Interests of Good Government

PUBLISHED BY

The Fairmount Improvement Association
HYDE PARK, MASS.

APRIL, 1905

Remember Arbor day, April 29.

The earth and the stars move, as does also the Fairmount avenue and Bridge street grade crossings question—although the latter moves so slowly as to be almost imperceptible. Nevertheless, we are still full of faith and hope.

The time is fast approaching when the members of the Board of Selectmen will make enemies by not having complimentary tickets to the races to pass around, or by refusing to loan their own personal passes. It is understood that there are citizens who consider this little favor of more importance than the town's welfare.

Our Board of Selectmen is to be commended upon its decision to appoint an Advisory Committee. Henceforth, as The Bulletin pointed out in the February issue, it should be a regularly appointed committee. Appointments should be made as early as possible as there are many important questions constantly coming up which need their careful and intelligent consideration.

The selection of Charles F. Jenney, Esq., as town counsel will surely meet the approval of our citizens in general, and the Fairmounters in particular. Mr. Jenney is thoroughly posted in all town matters, and brings to the position a ripe experience and hearty interest in town affairs. In the present condition of matters regarding our grade crossings question, which he has so forcibly presented to the Grade Crossing Commission, we believe that to have made a change at this time would have been to take unwarranted chances with the interests of the town.

THANKS

Our thanks are yours, Brothers Moseley and McGregor, for your encouraging words in the Times and Gazette in behalf of the March Bulletin. We are aware of our diminutiveness, but praise of our appearance and general good behavior from two such eminent authorities leads us to the belief that after all there is more truth than fiction in the old saying that "precious things often come in small packages."

DELAY UNNECESSARY

The committee appointed by the town last December to consider the building of a crossing for pedestrians over the river and over or under the railroad at Glenwood avenue submitted its report at the March town meeting. The report was complete and concise, and set forth in a convincing manner the needs of a foot bridge at this point. Moreover, it stated that the railroad and the Metropolitan Park Commission were both agreeable to the project. It was unanimously accepted, and the town authorized and instructed the Board of Selectmen to lay out and construct a bridge according to the recommendations of the committee.

The further action of the meeting, following the report of the committee, in providing a fund at once available for the purpose of building a bridge should ensure the immediate construction of this much needed way. So well did the committee perform their labors that nothing now remains for the Selectmen to do but to prepare the detail plans and let the contract. The New York, New Haven & Hartford railroad can better do their part of the work now than later, when the engineering department is flooded with a rush of summer construction work. Our citizens most directly interested in this matter should see to it that no unnecessary delay occurs through the pressure of other business that always monopolizes, more or less, the time and attention of our Selectmen.

ASSOCIATION NOTES

A tablet, appropriately inscribed, is soon to be placed on the Aldrich house, Milton street, thus marking this historic building, it being the oldest house now standing in the town.

The Readville Association are to observe Arbor Day by planting several trees in the sidewalks about Camp Meigs Memorial Park. They will be protected by the most improved style of wire guard.

The Readville Association has had a large photograph of the Damon schoolhouse prepared, which is to be exhibited in Hyde Park, so that the citizens of the town can see for themselves how urgent is the need of a new building in a new location.

James A. Tilden has been appointed chairman of the Fairmount association railroad committee. Mr. Tilden has been chairman of this committee since the inception of the association, and his able handling of the grade crossings question in the past has been such as to inspire the confidence of members and citizens alike.

NEW COMMISSIONER CHOSEN

The vacancy on the Grade Crossing Commission, caused by the death of Hon. Henry S. Moulton, has been filled by the appointment of Dwight D. Jones, Esq. Mr. Jones is a lawyer, and was formerly district attorney. He has the reputation of being a fair-minded and just man, and Hyde Park's interests in these two important grade crossings will not suffer by his appointment if the question is as ably and forcibly presented to the commission as it has been in the past.

We can fully trust the town's attorney to properly see to this matter. Charles F. Jenney will leave no stone unturned in looking after the town's interests. However, he should be sustained in this not only by the official backing of the Selectmen, but by a strong public sentiment that shall make it clear to the commission that Hyde Park wants the best possible solution, and nothing but the best.

Undoubtedly a new view of the locations will be taken by the commission, and this will probably be followed by one or more hearings, in order that the new commissioner may fully acquaint himself with the needs and requirements of the situation at Fairmount avenue and Bridgestreet.

While to most of us in the Fairmount district this has been a long drawn out struggle, it will prove to be effort well expended if we succeed in bringing about the best possible solution, instead of accepting the very worst because of its cheapness.

We should keep alive our interest in the work of the commission, and if public hearings are given we should manifest this interest by attending them.

It is hoped with the advent of a new commissioner things will move more rapidly and that an early decision will be reached.

GOT WHAT HE ASKED FOR

A good story is going the rounds about our genial Moderator, Charles G. Chick. It is related that a few years ago he gave his

stirring lecture, "The Spark That Kindled the Revolution," before a large and appreciative audience in a town not many miles from Hyde Park, and at its conclusion made haste to catch the last train home. The night was bitter cold, and after waiting at the station a long time he concluded that the last train must have come and gone. Thoroughly chilled, he decided to look up a hotel. On arriving at the only one in town, Mr. Chick inquired of the attendant, who was locking the books in the safe, if he had a good, warm room. After eyeing Hyde Park's eminent townsman suspiciously, the attendant asked in a gruff tone of voice:

"Warm room! Where do you expect to find a good, warm room a night like this?"

Mr. Chick informed the attendant that that was what he was accustomed to, and if he had the genuine article he, Mr. Chick, would like to take immediate possession.

"Do you think that your room is good and warm tonight, with the weather thirty degrees below zero?" snapped the attendant.

"Well," said Mr. Chick, mildly, "I have no doubt that it's quite comfortable, despite the extreme cold."

"Well, you ought to have stayed there," was the rejoinder.

Finally, after making sure the safety of the books, the attendant condescended to show Mr. Chick a room, the air of which was stifling it was so warm. This was perfectly satisfactory. After giving the attendant instructions to call him early, Mr. Chick began to disrobe.

"Very well," said the attendant, "but the price of this room is fifty cents."

"Well, shall I pay you now or in the morning?" asked Mr. Chick.

"You'd better pay now; I may not set eyes on you in the morning."

Taking the money handed him, the attendant pointed to the electric light, and said:

"Turn that light out. Don't attempt to blow it."

With this Mr. Chick was left to enjoy his dreams of the approaching town meeting.

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DAMON SCHOOL QUESTION

The Readville Improvement Association, at its last regular January meeting, appointed a committee of seven to report upon the needs of the Readville district as regards the erection of a new schoolhouse in a different location. The committee has made the following report:

Your committee has visited the Damon school, has thoroughly examined the premises, has secured information as to the efficiency of the school being affected by the near proximity of the B. F. Sturtevant Company's works, and are unanimous in the opinion that the present location is such that it has become essential to the success of the school that a change of location be made at the earliest possible moment.

The noise made by the works is such that the rooms on the north side are practically useless, and those on the south side, as soon as spring comes and the windows are open, will be so noisy that teachers and scholars will work under a serious handicap.

The odors from the foundry chimney, when the wind is blowing toward the schoolhouse, are disagreeable and unhealthful, and render it impossible to properly ventilate the school rooms.

We feel that it is not right for a town of the wealth and standing of Hyde Park to require our children to attend school under such conditions.

We feel that it is a short-sighted policy to spend money upon repairs of the present building. No matter how extensive repairs might be made, the location is still the same, and nothing can neutralize the disadvantages of the present site. We do, however,

recognize that it is inconsiderate to require the teachers and girls to walk across the yard to the present outhouses, in plain view of the men and boys in the adjoining building, and we accordingly recommend that sanitariums be at once installed in the schoolhouse, this to be done in the least expensive manner possible.

To move the present building is entirely impracticable.

We recommend that the citizens of our portion of the town at once present our needs to the school committee, and that we request that the necessary steps be taken to have a suitable building in an unobjectionable location provided as soon as possible.

(Signed)

J. R. Corthell, Chairman,
H. E. Astley, Secretary,
R. W. Wright,
E. M. Crandall,
Albert Davenport,
H. A. Pellett,
C. H. Lee.

Chief John H. Wetherbee gave interesting talks the past month on the needs of the fire department before the Fairmount, Readville and Hazelwood Improvement Associations. As a result citizens generally attended the appropriation meeting with a better understanding of the improvements necessary in this important department of our town, and consequently better able to vote intelligently on the recommendations of the committee reporting the necessity of a new fire station.

With a Board of Selectmen inclined to follow the instructions of the town it would seem that nothing could long delay the building of a foot bridge at Glenwood avenue.



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We are selling the best of clothing 20 to 25 per cent. less than Boston stores, simply because our expenses are as nothing in comparison.

We are selling SUITS and OVERCOATS for \$10 that will cost you \$12.50 to \$15 in Boston. We are selling clothes for \$12 to \$20 that you'll find marked \$16 to \$25 in the city stores. The same, IDENTICAL clothes.

We want you to compare our prices.

We want an opportunity to prove up.

Won't you "bother" enough to allow us to show you what we can do for you?

You'll save from \$2.50 to \$5 just by "bothering."

KENNEDY'S

Hyde Park's Best Clothing and Shoe House



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TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY

To buy or not to buy, that is the question. With the appointment of another committee which is expected to report before May 28 the citizens of Hyde Park are to be confronted for a fourth time with the serious proposition of the purchase of the water works. Serious because a mistake either way at this time may involve consequences to the town that will ever afterward be burdensome.

If we do not buy we shall continue to be burdened with the Metropolitan assessment, and the cost of an ever increasing hydrant service. While some future Moses may lead us out from under the burden of the one, there is no possible way we can evade the other.

On the other hand, if we buy at too high a figure we shall be burdened with a tax and annual expense which may not only overbalance the saving in the items mentioned, but involve us all in the burden of a higher water rate.

Everything then depends on the price set upon the plant. If the citizens are informed on this point there is no question but the vote will be to buy at any reasonable price. No one expects the water company to sell at a loss; on the other hand, everyone believes they are entitled to a just profit on their investment, as well as a liberal compensation for their labors in developing our present admirable water system.

No disinterested citizen, however, believes that a fictitious value should be set upon the franchise. That was given them by the town, and now that the citizens want it back they should have a right to take it without undue compensation.

At the Board of Trade dinner some three years ago Mr. Robert Bleakie, president of the water company, publicly stated that when the town was ready to buy the company would meet them in a proper and liberal spirit. The time has come when this can be manifested. The town is ready to buy. A committee of fair-minded, representative men has been appointed to confer

with officials of the water company. No outside commission that could be appointed would be so well qualified to judge of the value of this plant as is the company itself and this committee.

Many who, on general principles, favor the acquisition of the plant by the town are unalterably opposed to voting to buy without first knowing the price to be paid. It seems an unbusinesslike proceeding. It is not the way individuals conduct a transaction. Why should there be a different course of action pursued where the public body is concerned?

If the water company want to sell they have their price. Why not name it? If they don't want to sell they still have their price, although in that case it may be higher than the town can afford to pay. Why not set it?

The most witty and at the same time forceful argument at the March appropriation meeting was that made by J. J. Keane in favor of the Glenwood avenue foot bridge. The meeting had voted to provide the police department with a combination ambulance and hurry-up wagon, and passed to the consideration of the committee report on a foot bridge across the river at Glenwood avenue. An attempt was being made to recommit the question to the committee with instructions to report for a highway bridge, when Mr. Keane took the floor, and said in part: "What we want is a foot bridge. If a neighbor goes down to the river and sees a friend on the opposite side he can say good morning, but if he wants to shake hands he must walk two miles. If I walk legally it takes me about thirty-five minutes to go from my house to my work; but by walking illegally I can get there in eight. For heaven's sake lets not delay settling this matter till the police get their hurry-up wagon." The recommendations of the committee, which favored the immediate building of a foot bridge, were carried unanimously.

The man who can't take time to vote is the grafters friend.

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